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This Week's Forums: Page 24 & 26

EDUCATION WEEK

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Ruling Supports Limited Use of Bilingual Method

Program That Stresses English Ruled 'Sound'

By Deborah L. Cohen

A federal court ruled last week that the Berkeley, Calif., school district offers a "sound educational program" for limited-English-proficient pupils even though it does not rely heavily on native-language instruction by certified bilingual teachers.

Those supporting the district said last week that the ruling in *Theresa P.* v. *Berkeley Unified School District* marks the first time a court has expressly stated that methods stressing the use of English can be as effective in teaching L.E.P. pupils as native-language instruction.

"After reviewing the evidence presented in this case, this Court concludes that the plaintiffs have not met their burden to show that the [Berkeley school district's] program is not pedagogically sound," U.S. District Judge D. Lowell Jensen of San Francisco said in the Feb. 14 ruling.

"In fact," the judge said, "the evidence shows that the educational theories upon which [the] programs are grounded are manifestly as sound as any theory identified by plaintiffs."

The case sets an important precedent nationally because "all of the cases to date have been predicated on the assumption that bilingual education is the most effective approach," said Celia M. Ruiz, a lawyer

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AP/Wide World

President Bush surrounded by members of Congress after unveiling his agenda in Feb. 9 address to the House and Senate.

Bush Budget Plan Has Congress Searching for 'the Bottom Line'

By Julie A. Miller

WASHINGTON—A week of analysis and rhetoric has done little to clarify just how much education spending President Bush proposed when he unveiled his fiscal 1990 budget revisions on Feb. 9.

"It's a great exercise in fakery. It highlights a bunch of ideas, but there's no bottom line," a Democratic Congressional aide said. "If you asked [Secretary of Education] Lauro Cavazos what the Administration wanted for education in 1990, he couldn't give you a straight answer."

The Bush proposal laid out a series of new education programs that would cost a total of $441 million.

It also proposed to pay for these and other new initiatives by reducing growth in the defense budget and freezing 1990 outlays in a "vast array" of domestic programs at the 1989 level of $136 billion.

But the President did not specify which programs he proposed to cut in order to meet that target, a tactic that was denounced last week by House and Senate Democrats.

"This is a thousand points of light, but the batteries have not been included at this point," Senator Jim Sasser, Democrat of Tennessee and chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, said at a news conference.

"Despite the rhetoric, there are no overall education increases here, and there may be cuts," added Representative Leon Panetta,

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Youth Volunteer Service Taking Center Stage in Capital

By Lisa Jennings

WASHINGTON—For the first time since the Johnson Administration a quarter-century ago, the notion of young people serving the country through volunteer work has captured a signficant amount of attention on Capitol Hill.

This week, Senators Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island and Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts were expected to join the growing list of legislators introducing bills that seek to encourage young Americans to undertake community service.

Six such bills have already been introduced in the 101st Congress this month. President Bush earlier focused public attention on the idea in his campaign proposal for a national foundation for youth service, and has signaled his continuing Presidential interest by creating the White House Office of National Service.

Senate leaders, also indicating interest, have scheduled hearings next month on the topic.

Leaders of service organizations from across the country—meeting in Washington last week to plot their strategy for the coming legislative debate—said they were delighted by the new wave of attention and support. The issue "is finally being taken seriously," said one member of the informal coalition.

The flurry of legislative proposals that have been introduced so far share a common assumption: that the federal government has a role to play in providing organization and financial resources to support voluntarism among the young.

The current bills also unanimously reject the idea, sometimes suggested by national-service advocates in the past, that the new program should be mandatory—in effect, a universal "draft" of young people for mili-

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In Troubled W. Va., New Governor Sets Bold Renewal Plan

By Nancy Mathis

Saying education "is a do or die issue" for West Virginia, Gov. Gaston Caperton last week outlined an ambitious plan to rescue the state's beleaguered public-school system.

In his first State of the State Address, the new governor offered proposals to shore up the nearly bankrupt teacher-retirement fund, pay off overdue medical claims, provide a salary increase to teachers, and improve remedial education.

Mr. Caperton also called for a $500-million school-construction program. And he asked lawmakers to back a constitutional amendment that would reconstitute the state board of education, allow the Governor to appoint the state school superintendent, and create a new post of secretary of education and the arts.

"The vision I see with the passage of the education package is a state in which education becomes the catalyst for social and economic regeneration," said Mr. Caperton.

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Big-Time Sports = Big-Time Woe?

Some Fear TV Contracts May Lead to Corruption

By Mark Walsh

Plans in the works for a nationally televised high-school game of the week in boys' football and basketball will inevitably raise the media and money stakes in high-school sports, educators and others said last week.

And the news of the proposals, which some state sports officials still had not received officially last week, has sparked acrimonious debate oyer the implications of "going big-time."

The national governing body of state athletic associations, which initiated and is negotiating the cable-television deal, sought to defend itself last week against charges of greed and commercialism leveled by the press and some educators.

"I think our motives are true here," said Warren S. Brown, assistant executive secretary of the National Federation of State High School Associations. "Our motives are to have a vehicle to promote the positive sides of high-school sports."

In fact, significant national attention is already being focused on precollegiate athletics. A national newspaper now ranks high-school teams in several sports, a popular cable-television program focuses on school athletes, and a number of teams have played in nationally telecast games.

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Shortchanging Children?
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John Gastaldo/The Jersey Journal

St. Anthony's Terry Dehere air-borne. Team tops USA Today's national rankings.

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Texas school officials are considering guidelines that would for the first time require publishers to include coverage of the theory of evolution in biology textbooks. **Page 7.**

Sooner Tax Fight
Oklahoma lawmakers are embroiled in controversy over efforts to change the state's property-tax system, which experts predict could create a fiscal crisis for the public schools. **Page 8.**

How Many Homeless?
The Education Department estimates that there are 220,000 school-age homeless children, but urges that the figure be viewed with caution because of problems with state data collection. **Page 15.**

Hawkins on Choice
The chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee made clear last week his opposition to President Bush's proposal to allow parents greater choice among public schools. **Page 15.**

Research Contract Questioned
Despite complaints, the Education Department has awarded the contract for a new research center on education of the disadvantaged to Johns Hopkins University. **Page 16.**

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ACROSS THE NATION

STATES

Too Many Minnesota Students Put In Special Education, Report Says

At least 20,000 students in Minnesota may be inappropriately placed in special-education courses, according to a report by the state department of education.

The excessive placements are due to the tendency of many districts to view the programs as catch-alls for troubled students, the report argues.

After examining the records of 440 special-education students, department officials concluded that only 30 to 40 percent have handicaps that qualify them for such services.

Statewide, 55,000 students participated in special-education programs during the 1986-87 school year.

The report is likely to spur efforts by the department and the legislature to set uniform standards for special-education placements, officials said. Minnesota is one of only a handful of states that provide guidelines for special-education placements but permit districts to set their own standards.

■ **The responses of more than 12,000 Coloradans to a public-opinion poll on the state's education agenda will be released this week.**

As part of SchoolVote—a joint project of the Denver-based Public Education Coalition, the *Rocky Mountain News*, and KUSA-TV—viewers and readers were asked to voice their concerns on such issues as early-childhood education, "social ills" in schools, school-based management, and parental choice.

To stimulate debate, the station and the newspaper carried extensive background materials on the issues in the week before the ballots were published. A group of state lawmakers, school officials, and others will hold a televised discussion of the results of the poll after they are released.

Bob Sullivan, the station's assistant news director and a leader of the project, said the poll is a refinement of surveys taken in recent years in Philadelphia and Milwaukee under the auspices of the New York-based Public Agenda Foundation.

■ **Some schools in Kentucky were closed for two or more days last week due to flooding** from a storm leaving more than 10 inches of rain in the central and western sections of the state. Scattered closings were also reported in Tennessee.

A storm center stalled over the region for nearly five days, causing rivers and creeks to overflow their banks. Many homes and businesses were flooded and roads became impassable.

Gov. Wallace G. Wilkinson declared a state of emergency last Thursday and directed the National Guard to assist in evacuation efforts.

James Parks, a spokesman for the state department of education, said that most school closings where due to transportation problems caused by blocked roads.

Many of the affected districts chose to keep their schools open, but halted transportation in flooded areas.

DISTRICTS

Fort Wayne Board Supports New Desegregation Proposal

The Fort Wayne, Ind., school board last week approved a tentative settlement in the third major desegregation action faced by the district in the past 20 years.

The agreement would require the district to attempt to achieve racial balance in its schools within three years through the use of magnet schools and voluntary student transfers.

The plan will not be presented to the federal courts for approval until state officials, who are also a party in the suit, agree to provide additional funding for remedial and compensatory programs. Those involved in the agreement also want a change in state law to enable the district to raise its share of the plan's costs, according to William Taylor, whose Washington-based law firm is representing the plaintiffs in the case, a group of white and black parents.

The district, which currently has 32,000 students, was required to desegregate its junior high and high schools under a 1971 federal-court order. Subsequently, it took steps to achieve balance in its elementary schools as a result of a 1986 agreement with the U.S. Education Department's office for civil rights.

The Fort Wayne parents' group felt the agreement with the O.C.R. did not do enough to counter racial imbalances, however. The group filed suit for further relief in 1987.

■ **The Cleveland school system will receive $7.4 million of the $13.2 million in overdue property taxes that LTV Steel Company has promised to pay in return for a 10-year tax break granted by the city,** officials said last week.

The agreement must be approved by a creditors' committee overseeing the bankrupt firm's reorganization efforts. The company refused to pay back taxes after filing for bankruptcy in 1986.

In nearby Lorain, meanwhile, a long-running tax-abatement controversy with a potentially major impact on school finances has come to an end. In a surprise vote, the city council defeated a proposal to give a 10-year tax cut to the Ford Motor Company.

The neighboring Vermilion school district, which is a major beneficiary of local tax revenues from a Ford facility, originally had opposed the plan, which would have cut the automaker's taxes by 50 percent. The district dropped its challenges after the city made some modifications, according to Jack D. Hook, the Vermilion superintendent, but the plan was defeated nonetheless.

■ **Laconia, N.H., officials acted improperly in assessing real-estate developers a fee to pay for school construction,** a state judge has ruled.

The fee, levied last year, of 71 cents per square foot of newly built space was aimed at charging apartment developers in the fast-growing city for their impact on schools, according to James Sessler, the city's attorney.

"The phenomenal growth has out-

Clean-Lunchbox Club

Peter Steiner

Four months ago, students at Randall Elementary School in Waukesha, Wis., were apt to throw away uneaten apples, oranges, and sandwiches in their rush to get from lunch to recess.

But since December, they have been cleaning out their lunch boxes—or taking the leftovers home.

The impetus for the behavior change was a new school rule that forbids tossing perfectly good food into cafeteria garbage cans.

George Ruecktenwald, the school's principal, says that the policy was designed not only to put an end to waste, but also to help students put into practice the lessons that they are being taught in nutrition classes.

Parents, too, are reaping benefits from the new rule, the principal explained. Since students at Randall bring their own home-packed lunches, the necessity of eating all that is set before them has made many give more serious thought to the contents of their lunch boxes. Some children are now asking their parents to provide them with a less bountiful lunch.

Devising an effective strategy for enforcing the no-waste rule was a problem, Mr. Ruecktenwald admits. And students complained, in the first few weeks, that the extra attention to food consumption was eating into their playground time.

But now, the principal says, "we have it refined to where students who can't finish their food take the leftovers home." Meanwhile, cafeteria monitors keep a watchful eye out to see that no food finds its way into trash cans.

Of course, Mr. Ruecktenwald concedes, it's impossible to monitor each child's lunch consumption. "Those looking for loopholes can easily find them," he says. "We're not searching students to make sure they aren't hiding a pear, nor do we go through the garbage to check for wasted food."

But those who clean their plates—legitimately—can expect a reward. They are eligible to buy, for 25 cents, an ice-cream sandwich dispensed by the principal, who strolls the cafeteria each day, ice cream in hand, asking his charges if they've finished their lunch.

—J.W.

stripped the ability of schools to keep pace," he said. "Developers should pay their fair share for new classrooms and teachers."

But Superior Court Judge William O'Neil ruled that the legislature had not authorized the city to levy such fees.

Laconia officials plan to appeal the ruling to the state's supreme court.

■ **School officials in Corpus Christi, Tex., are reconsidering their policy of allowing a Bible survey course to be taught by instructors who are paid by a local religious group.**

George P. Wetzel, the district's assistant superintendent for secondary education, said last week that he questioned the legality of the practice after learning of a 1985 ruling on a similar practice by state Attorney General Jim Mattox.

Mr. Mattox said it was unconstitutional for state colleges and universities to offer Bible courses for academic credit if they were taught by professors selected and paid for by religious organizations.

The three teachers of the Corpus Christi course are paid by Bible in the Schools, a local interdenominational group. Although the course has been taught in city high schools for decades, Mr. Wetzel said, it was offered for academic credit for the first time this year after state officials approved the curriculum.

■ **The Charleston County, S.C., school district has the authority to establish a "no-pass, no-play" rule that is stricter than the state's policy,** a local judge has ruled.

Under state guidelines, students must pass a total of five courses in a semester, or any four that are required for graduation, to be eligible for athletics and other interscholastic activities.

The county policy, however, bars students who have failed any courses.

The rule was challenged by a high-school wrestler, Wayne K. Grace Jr., who had failed one course last semester.

The district successfully argued before Circuit Judge William L. Howard that it had the right to enact its own standards.

■ **The terms served by members of the Denver school board should be cut from six years to four,** according to the Denver Classroom Teachers Association.

"We think it will make the school board more accountable to the public," said Jan Erskine, president of the National Education Association affiliate.

The union has asked the board to submit the idea to a referendum on the May 16 ballot. The board must take action by March 16 to include the measure on the ballot.

The majority of school boards in Colorado have four-year terms, Ms. Erskine said.

Meanwhile, Ed Garner, president of the Denver board, has had some critical words for the district's teacher-evaluation program, which he thinks may be too lax.

Only 21 of the district's 3,900 teachers had been placed on formal improvemant plans, Mr. Garner noted. Under the program, approved by the legislature in 1984, teachers are told they must improve or face dismissal. Only two of the 21 Denver teachers were dismissed.

■ **School employees in Duval County, Fla., who make political endorsements or commercials would have to include a disclaimer stating that their views were not sanctioned by the district,** under a proposal pending before the county school board.

Superintendent of Schools Herb A. Sang said he expected the board to act this week to require such a statement whenever the district's property, equipment, or employee titles are used in political advertisments.

The proposal stems from a complaint by the Florida Medical Association against a football coach, Charles Rogers, who made a commercial last year urging voters to reject a measure that would have limited awards in tort-claims lawsuits. Mr. Rogers, who had been struck by a car and had a lawsuit pending, made the televised plea during off-duty hours, but on school property and with student volunteers participating in a staged football practice in the background.

■ **The Palo Alto, Calif., district has delayed until next fall implementation of an AIDS-education curriculum that could include instruction for kindergartners.**

School-board members sought the postponement after receiving a letter from 22 kindergarten teachers, who urged that AIDS instruction not begin at such a young age.

The district had proposed an AIDS curriculum for elementary-school students, but did not specify if instruction would begin in kindergarten, officials said.

DIMENSIONS

Census of Elected School Officials

More than 93,000 people hold elective office within the nation's public-school systems, according to a survey by the Bureau of the Census.

School-board members and other school officials selected by the public account for a little less than 20 percent of the 504,404 elected officials at all levels of government, the bureau's 1987 census of governments found.

The great majority of elected school officials are board members for 14,721 independent school districts—the total found in the Census Bureau's latest tally. The bureau's figures also include officials of "dependent" systems, which are school districts under some measure of fiscal or administrative control of another type of government.

The 757 "other" elected officials within school districts include a total of 292 superintendents, the survey indicated.

Texas led the nation with a total of 7,705 elected school officials, followed closely by Illinois, with 7,140.

Women represent 26.5 percent of elected school officials—a higher percentage than elsewhere in local government, the report noted. Only 2.4 percent of the officials are black, while 1.8 percent are Hispanic.

Copies of "Popularly Elected Officials, Preliminary Report No. 2," 1987 Census of Governments, GC87 (P)-2, are available for $1 each from the Data User Services Division, Customer Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.

Type of Public School System	Number of Systems	School Board Members		Other Elected Officials
		Elected	Appointed	
Total	**16,213**	**92,162**	**5,557**	**1,272**
School Districts	14,721	86,015	2,574	757
Dependent Systems	1,492	6,147	2,983	515
State	25	119	3	138
County	584	1,569	2,292	78
Municipal	235	982	655	299
Township	648	3,477	33	-

PEOPLE

■ **Gov. Thomas H. Kean** of New Jersey, a former history teacher who has become known as one of the most active "education governors," will become president of Drew University in Madison, N.J., when his term ends next January.

Mr. Kean, who championed such initiatives as alternative certification of teachers and state takeover of "academically bankrupt" districts, has been a close adviser to President Bush on education issues. He turned down an offer of a high-level post in the Bush Administration, according to an aide, saying he wanted to serve out the remainder of his term and stay in New Jersey.

■ **Boys in drag are a drag, Los Angeles school officials have decided.**

Their decision effectively defrocks the cheerleading corps for the district's traditional "powder-puff" football games—in which girls compete to the huzzahs of male students dressed as female cheerleaders.

The new policy stems from officials' assessment, following some complaints, that the male cheerleaders' cross-dressing violates Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which bars schools from discriminating on the basis of sex.

The policy does not ban the powder-puff games themselves. But it prohibits male students from dressing as girls and "using props under their clothing which represent female anatomical features," according to a district spokesman.

Nonetheless, without the cross-dressing element the games appear to have lost much of their appeal and are being replaced by less controversial activities, the spokesman said.

■ After 80 hours and one minute of nonstop singing, the 18 members of **Apache Junction (Ariz.) High School's choir** have apparently clinched the world record for marathon singing and raised $6,500 towards their spring trip to Florida.

In the presence of officials from the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the choir members last month succeeded in surpassing a previous record of 78 hours and 28 minutes. The necessary papers have been submitted to *Guinness*, said Jack Larson, the school's principal, and the students are now awaiting official acceptance of their claim.

Although choir members were unable to do much more than whisper for a few days after the event, the community spirit it generated "was a good shot in the arm" and well worth a few exhausted vocal chords, said Mr. Larson.

Teachers, students, and parents provided a continuous audience and source of encouragement for the choir members, who periodically sought to keep themselves awake by marching around the school.

■ A federal judge in New Jersey has dismissed a 17-year-old high-school student's attempt to expunge a secret file that the Federal Bureau of Investigation kept on his efforts to compile a 6th-grade class project.

U.S. District Judge Alfred M. Wolin ruled that confidential F.B.I. documents failed to support the claim made by **Todd Patterson** that the bureau's efforts to open the youth's mail and tap his family's telephone violated his First Amendment right to "seek information and correspond freely."

However, Susan Cassell, an assistant U.S. attorney, said the F.B.I. is considering the judge's suggestion voluntarily to expunge the file "as a public-relations gesture."

The F.B.I. has acknowledged that it kept a file on Todd when he wrote to foreign embassies to collect material for a homemade encyclopedia.

Todd, currently a student at Don Bosco Preparatory School in Ramsey, N.J., has expressed concern that the file could jeopardize his chances of one day entering the diplomatic corps.

RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Finger-Counting Found Useful In Learning Arithmetic

Although teachers traditionally have discouraged pupils from counting on their fingers, the practice may in fact enhance the learning of arithmetic, two psychologists from Carnegie Mellon University argue.

The researchers, who studied 160 children from Pittsburgh and the nearby suburb of Monroeville, maintain that students learn best by giving the correct answer—no matter how they arrived at it.

"Part of the reason not-so-good students have problems," said Robert S. Siegler, who conducted the studies with Dennis Kerkman, "is that they are bad at executing 'back-up strategies'" such as finger-counting.

Without such strategies, Mr. Siegler added, "they create errors that they then confuse as right answers."

Forbidding finger-counting, he suggested, is like "killing the messenger for bearing bad news."

"Teachers reason that good students and older students tend not to use their fingers," he said, "and that bad students and younger students use them."

"They tend to make the poorer students superficially look like" the better students, the researcher added. "That doesn't seem to work very well."

Findings from the research are expected to be published later this year.

■ **Elderly "mentors" can be especially effective in working with troubled young people,** according to a new report by Public/Private Ventures.

The report released this month by the nonprofit research organization examines five "intergenerational" counseling programs in Michigan, Massachusetts, and Maine. The programs, targeted at such groups as teenage mothers, young offenders, and students in danger of dropping out of school, make use of members of the Foster Grandparents program, retirees from several labor unions, and other older volunteers.

Copies of "Partners in Growth: Elder Mentors and At-Risk Youth," are available for $5 each from the Communications Department, Public/Private Ventures, 399 Market St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19106-2178.